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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [ASEC](#) [GV](#)
SUBJECT: NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL LIMITS MEDIA
FREEDOM IN GUINEA

REF: CONAKRY 00503

¶1. (U) On August 31, 2009, the National Communications Council (CNC) issued a decree prohibiting discussion of political topics on all interactive programs in all languages until further notice. In response, on September 1, the Union of Free Radio and Television of Guinea (URTELGUI) issued a communique stating that the CNC decree is a violation of the freedom of expression of Guinean citizens. URTELGUI "condemned with its last energy" the communique, which they stated is contrary to recent statements by CNDD President Dadis Camara, who warned against threats to private radio stations. The URTELGUI communique noted that the union reserved the right to take the issue to the Supreme Court.

¶2. (U) PAS Conakry staff contacted personnel from the leading radio stations in Conakry who said that they were continuing to operate in the usual manner. Boubacar Yacine Diallo, Director General of Horizon FM and chairmen of URTELGUI said that his radio station hosted an interactive program on the CNC decision today. He believes that the decision will be reversed. Nostalgie FM, Liberte FM, and Espace FM personnel also confirmed that they will continue to host interactive discussions about political topics on their stations as usual.

¶3. (U) Jean Raymond Soumah, CNC President, gave an interview to the internet news site guineenews.org in which he stated that the decision was taken "so that liberties given to the media are not confused with 'liberticide'." According to Soumah, these measures could be lifted when the situation returns to normal, but did not say when that would be. Soumah said it is often the journalists that do not take appropriate measures to moderate their programs that creates a problem with this type of interactive program.

¶4. (U) Soumah has called a meeting with the public and private media and journalist associations for August 3 to discuss regulation during the transition. However, one journalist told PAS press assistant that he would not attend a meeting at the CNC until the ban was lifted. It is not known if other members of the press corps will do the same.

¶5. (SBU) COMMENT: This latest GOG decision follows on a number of recent indications that the CNDD is actively trying to silence any opposition to the military junta, and to the expected presidential candidacy of its President. Text messaging capabilities were turned off for approximately 48 hours last week in an attempt to squelch plans for anti-CNDD demonstrations (REFTEL). Political leaders are claiming that they are being denied access to media outlets while a number of contacts have reported falling victim to intimidation tactics. END COMMENT.

BROKENSIRE